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International Preliminary Examining Authority,
European Patent Office,
Erhardstrasse 27,
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Our Ref. AJL/SJ/P4027

Your Ref.

Date 18th January 2000

Dear Sirs;

PCT Patent Application No. PCT/GB99/00262
Connecting device
Ultraframe (UK) Limited (P4027)

This is in response to the first Written Opinion dated 17th November 1999.

We enclose in triplicate new pages 1 and 6 to replace the corresponding pages of the specification on file at present.

Document D1, FR-A-1559036, discloses various forms of cable clamp, in which a U-shaped base part has a snap-on cover to hold a cable in place. The two parts of the cable clamp engage in a direction transversely of the cable. By contrast, the connecting device of the present invention has two parts that slidably engage in the direction of the pipe. That has advantages in that the connecting device of the invention is easier to assemble and to disassemble and in that the device is better able to hold pipes in place. With the prior art devices shown in D1 some can have the cover part pulled off in the direction of the cable making them unsuitable for holding vertical pipes and in others pulling on the cable can easily break the connection of the two parts.

Claim 1 has been amended to emphasise the differences over the prior art represented by D1 and the remaining claims and corresponding description have been amended for consistency.

We now look forward to issuance of a favourable International Preliminary Examination Report.

Yours faithfully,

ROYSTONS